

'Not Forgotten'

Sun. July 11<sup>th</sup> 1965

# Heber Tabernacle Gets New Culture Function

By George Dibble

The red sandstones of the Heber Stake Tabernacle seemed to glow last week — warmed by the affection of a generation that has not forgotten.

The rich textural charm of the walls and tower was formulated in the clean strokes of the craftsman's tool three quarters of a century ago. The long windows, gently arched, repeat the firm vertical lines of the buttresses that lead to the neatly shuttered cupola above the blue-green valley floor. Classic lines born of pioneer sacrifice and devotion shun the weakness of affectation and pretense. In this monument to purpose, imagination, devotion and skill the builders enshrined their noblest hopes and dreams in a tabernacle they dedicated to the Glory of God.

## Refreshing Simplicity

Inside, the same refreshing simplicity prevails. Essentially contemporary, the appointments, through sheer economy, effect simple utilitarian values. The windows, lighter by contrast, from within the framing walls invite nostalgia. They recall a similar structure set in an abundant countryside and a small boy who squirmed when the sermons were long.

The drumming rain on the



Mr. Dibble

brittle glass found some elemental kinship in the tones of the organ. Then there was a pleasant smell of assuaged dust and freshly washed leaves that would eventually impart a musty odor to the heavy showers and cool brisk air in October.

## Beauty Acclaimed

But sentiment should take its place with nostalgia in the echoes of the past. The distinctive beauty of the Heber Tabernacle has been acclaimed by a community that will devote the resources to a cultural center.

The traveler who pauses for a moment at the historic square may learn from a plaque erected by the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers that the community was founded in 1859-60 by 18 families called by Brigham Young. Indian raids forced the settlers to build a fort.

A short distance from the square, Chief Tabby and members of his tribe effected a treaty at the home of Bishop Joseph S. Murdock August 20, 1867. The Tabernacle was completed twenty years later by a community that has contributed distinguished citizens to all walks of life.

## County Hopping in ...

# UTAH AND WASATCH COUNTIES

The "Alps of America" is a name often applied to this beautiful heartland of northern Utah. An apt name it is, for these counties embrace some of the most ruggedly spectacular mountains in the nation — monarch peaks that look down on green valleys and blue lakes.

## UTAH COUNTY

AREA — 1,998 square miles (land area)

POPULATION 1960 — 106,991

MAIN CITIES AND TOWNS (1960 populations)

Provo 36,047 Spanish Fork 6,472

Orem 18,394 American Fork 6,373

Springville 7,913 Fork 6,373

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES — Steel manufacturing and related industries, trade, higher education, agriculture, livestock



TOPOGRAPHY — Parts of three physiographic provinces: Great Basin (Utah Valley), Rocky Mountains (Wasatch Range), and Colorado Plateau (Wasatch Plateau).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND — Created 1850 by State of Deseret. Named for Ute Indians. Provo settled 1849.

POINTS OF INTEREST AND ACTIVITIES —

Camp Floyd State Park (Old Stagecoach Inn, military cemetery, commissary)

Utah Lake — boating, fishing

Springville High School Art Gallery

Timpanogos Cave National Monument

Brigham Young University — largest university in state

Geneva Steel Works

Sky Ride — aerial tramway in Provo Canyon

Mountain Drives (Alpine, Nebo, Squaw Peak, Hobbie Creek, etc.)

SOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION —

Chambers of Commerce in Provo, American Fork, Orem

Springville, Spanish Fork, Payson

Uinta National Forest, Provo

Timpanogos Cave National Monument, American Fork

## WASATCH COUNTY

AREA — 1,194 square miles

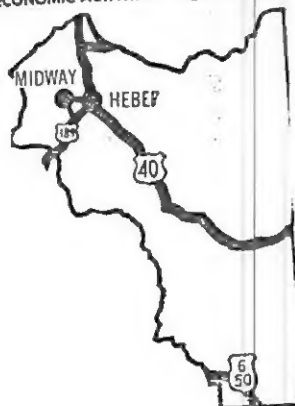
POPULATION 1960 — 5,308

MAIN CITIES AND TOWNS (1960 populations)

Heber 2,936 Charleston 223

Midway 713

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES — Agriculture, mining, trade



TOPOGRAPHY — Outside of Heber Valley, the county is mountainous (Wasatch and Uinta ranges).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND — Created 1862, Nevada Territory. Wasatch Mountains. Heber settled 1859.

POINTS OF INTEREST AND ACTIVITIES —

Wasatch Mountain State Park — scenic drives, picnicking

Deer Creek and Strawberry reservoirs — excellent fishing

Wasatch Stake Tabernacle, Heber City — distinctive historical structure

Midway — swimming and recreational resorts; celebration

Heber Valley — lovely pastoral region

Wolf Creek — hunting, fishing, camping

SOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION —

Chamber of Commerce, Heber

Uinta National Forest, Provo

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## Heber Citizens Applaud New City Culture Center

By Melba M. Ferguson  
Tribune Staff Writer

HEBER CITY—Residents here are jubilant over their new "cultural center."

Actually, it isn't new.

It is the old Wasatch Stake Tabernacle—an ancient red sandstone building which has become a landmark over the three-quarters of a century it has stood.

### Fight Destruction

When it was slated to be torn down and new stake center erected on the site, a small group

of persistent citizens began to work toward its preservation.

They formed a "Save the Tabernacle" committee and together with the Utah State Historical Society, the Heber City Council and other interested Utahns succeeded in raising \$60,000 to purchase the pioneer edifice from the LDS Church.

### Little Theatre

The new LDS stake center will be located at another site, 188 W. 1st North.

"We are going to use the old building, I think, as a 'little theater' and present different types of drama and musical entertainment, with both local and outside talent," said Mrs. Ruth Witt, who has long worked for the project.

Expressing herself as "really thrilled" about the salvation of the building, which has a separate "social hall," she said that "one generation hasn't the right to destroy the art, culture and beauty left by a former generation."

### Different Matter

"We owe it to future generations to preserve some of these things that tied and past to the present and the future," she said.

Remarking that new buildings nowadays "may be a little more up-to-date for present day use," Mrs. Witt said she felt that buildings such as the tabernacle should be kept "to remind us that to put up a building nowadays, with the equipment and materials we have, is no great feat; but to build one when the pioneers came here was an entirely different matter."

### Reminder of Past

"They had only their hands and a few handmade tools," she said, "but with these they chiseled the stone from the mountains and hauled it to the building site by ox team."

"This is why such a building should be preserved as a reminder of their culture, craftsmanship, courage, hard work and sensitive feeling for beauty."

Heber City Commissioner and Mrs. Guy S. McDonald, who also worked toward preserving the building, noted that the edifice not only will "provide a fine cultural center, but also a badly needed community park."

### Arsenic and Lace

Already, Don R. Barker, who was leader of the "Save the Tabernacle" group, and now heads the Wasatch Historical Society, said "it means much to people of this area to have the building remain and be used for the cultural events, plays, musical entertainments and other things of that nature which are being planned."

"A group already is rehearsing to present 'Arsenic and Old Lace,'" he said. "And a local musical group will soon start rehearsing there. We are in the process of lining up some stage plays from the University of Utah and Brigham Young University. These will come as the season progresses and they become available to us."

He said that for next summer's program, short variety entertainments to interest tourists are being planned.

### Spring in the Step

Floyd Garn Hatch of Salt Lake City, whose grandfather,

# Heber Tabernacle

By JAN PADFIELD  
Deseret News Staff Writer

HEBER CITY—Wasatch Stake Tabernacle will continue to dominate the landscape of Heber Valley—with a new owner, the people of Heber City.

Title of the tabernacle and surrounding grounds will be deeded by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to Heber City, with the restriction that activities and uses comply with Church standards, said Wilford W. Kirton Jr., attorney, general counsel for the Church.

Money received by the Church for the tabernacle will be used toward purchase of a \$60,000 site

for a new combined ward-stake center.

Part of the funds for the site were collected in a volunteer drive to save the 80-year-old landmark from demolition squads.

It was proposed the Church lease the tabernacle and grounds to the city. But Mayor Raymond N. Jiacoletti said city council members did not favor that plan.

The city will use the area as a municipal park. The building, to be maintained by the newly organized Wasatch Historical Society, will be a cultural center.

Fund-raising plans are under way by the historical society to raise \$14,000 in the next month

to help defray and building maintenance costs.

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### SCENE TODAY

## Heber Hall Is SAVED

By TED CANNON

As you've probably noticed in the news columns, the historic Wasatch Stake Tabernacle in Heber City has been saved from its earlier intended fate of demolition in the path of progress.

Title to the beautiful pioneer structure has now passed to the city of Heber which will work on its renovation, rehabilitation and future use in cooperation with the newly formed Wasatch Historical Society.

And herewith a resounding Cannon Salute to all those who labored so long and diligently to preserve the ancient structure. . . . We hesitate to start naming names for fear of omitting someone, but will mention as prominent in the movement the officers of the new society, Don Barker, president; Guy McDonald, vice president; Barbara McDonald, secretary, and Ruth Witt, treasurer.

And in addition to these, Garn Hatch who really spearheaded the drive, along with Dr. William Jordan, Dr. Joseph Hatch, and many, many others.

And may it be pointed out here that the job is far from finished. A considerable amount of money was needed to save the building. Much has been contributed, more has been pledged. But there are obligations to be met, and donations to the cause are still most acceptable. Send them along to the First Security Bank at Heber, care of the Wasatch Historical Society.

A number of special fund-raising events have already been held in the building, and now that the ownership business is finally settled, more are planned.

Meanwhile, if you're ever up that way, drive by and have a look at the place. Long a monument to pioneer thrift, craftsmanship and cooperation, it can now be regarded also as a monument to modern-day community spirit and dedication to a worthy cause. . . .

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Fund-raising plans are under way by the historical society to raise \$14,000 in the next month

to help defray site acquisition and building restoration and maintenance costs.

Dora Flack, Bountiful, will give a benefit performance in the building at 8:15 p.m. Friday, July 30, when she reviews Rodolfo Hunter's new book, "A House of Many Rooms, a novel about the Heber Valley.

Directed by Kent Larsen, chairman of the tabernacle program committee, a local dramatic group will present the play, "Arsenic and Old Lace," in the building in mid-August.

Other cultural events, both professional and amateur, will be scheduled on a regular basis, said Don Barker, chairman of the Wasatch Historical Society.

## Reminder of Past

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## Spring in the Step

Floyd Garn Hatch of Salt Lake City, whose grandfather, Abram Hatch, was Wasatch Stake president when the old tabernacle was built, also joined in the effort to save it.

He feels that it not only will have great historical interest to tourists, but is well designed and admirably suited to accommodation of conventions and other group activities.

"The social hall has one of the finest dance floors in the country," he said. He explained that it is one of "only about three dance floors left in the state" which are entirely mounted on springs. It also has a stage and kitchen facilities, he said.

## Praises Citizens

Dr. Everett L. Cooley, director of Utah State Historical Society, who started the "Save the Tabernacle" movement last year, lauded Heber City citizens, and especially its mayor and city council, for their efforts in preserving the buildings.

"I think it's great this has ended the way it has—that the city has the tabernacle," he said. "The Wasatch Historical Society now will be responsible for its restoration, but they will need support—moral and financial—to carry it through."

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